

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 AGR-05 TAR-01 SS-15 NSC-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8623

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EEC, EAID, EAGR

SUBJECT: EC EXTENSION OF FOOD AID CONVENTION

REF: (A) STATE 076220; (B) EC BRUSSELS 00861; (C) EC BRUSSELS
9503 OF 12/3/74.

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. AN EC COMMISSION OFFICIAL INFORMS US THAT THERE IS STILL DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE MEMBER STATES AT COREPER LEVEL ON EXTENDING THE FOOD AID CONVENTION FOR ONE YEAR. THE PROBLEM REMAINS ITALY'S DESIRE TO REDUCE ITS NATIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE EC FOOD AID COMMITMENT FOR 1974/75

(REF.B). A FAVORABLE DECISION ON THE EXTENSION IS NOT EXPECTED BY APRIL 14 BUT IS HOPED FOR BEFORE JUNE 18. END SUMMARY.

2. ITALY HAS ASKED THAT ITS NATIONAL FOOD AID OBLIGATION FOR 1974/75 BE REDUCED IN THE FACE OF ITS CONTINUING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES. IT HAS BEEN BEHIND IN MEETING ITS COMMITMENTS OF PAST YEARS AND FINDS ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF OBLIGATION TOO BURDENSOME. ACCORDING TO PRESENT ARRANGEMENT (REF C), THE EC COMMITMENT FOR 1974/75

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UNDER THE FOOD AID CONVENTION IS

1,287,000 MT. OF GRAINS, TO BE SHARED EQUALLY BETWEEN COMMUNITY-FINANCED ACTION ON THE ONE HAND, AND MEMBER STATE BILATERAL ACTIONS ON THE OTHER. IF ITALY'S SHARE UNDER THIS ARRANGEMENT IS REDUCED, THE QUESTION REMAINS AS TO HOW THE REDUCED PORTION WILL BE RE-DISTRIBUTED.

3. SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO AGREEMENT ON THIS ISSUE AT THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE (COREPER) LEVEL, AND UNTIL THERE IS THE EC CANNOT GIVE ITS GO-AHEAD FOR A YEAR'S EXTENSION OF THE FOOD AID CONVENTION. SEVERAL OPTIONS HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD, INCLUDING HAVING FRANCE AND GERMANY TAKE UP THE SLACK IN ITALY'S SHARE OR REDISTRIBUTE THE WHOLE EC PROGRAM TO 60 PERCENT COMMUNITY AND 40 PERCENT MEMBER STATES (THEREBY REDUCING ALL MEMBER STATE BILATERAL ACTIONS). GERMANY OPPOSES THE LATTER OPTION BECAUSE IT WANTS TO CONTINUE ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF BILATERAL FOOD AID (AND PERHAPS ALSO RECOGNIZES THAT AS THE CHIEF CONTRIBUTOR TO THE FEOGA, AN INCREASE IN THE COMMUNITY SHARE WOULD BE AT GERMAN EXPENSE).

4. THE ISSUE WILL BE TAKEN UP AT THE NEXT COREPER MEETING OF APRIL 9. THE KEY MEMBER STATES IN WORKING OUT A COMPROMISE WILL BE ITALY, FRANCE, AND GERMANY. OUR COMMISSION CONTACT DOES NOT EXPECT THE MATTER WILL BE RESOLVED AT THE APRIL 9 MEETING. BUT EVEN IF IT WERE RESOLVED AND THE FAC EXTENSION WERE PUT ON THE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING, APRIL 14, THIS WOULD BE TOO LATE TO REASONABLY MEET THE SIGNATURE DEADLINE IN REF A. THE COMMISSION IS OPTIMISTIC HOWEVER, THAT COMMUNITY AGREEMENT WILL COME BEFORE JUNE 18, 1975.

5. MISSION WILL INFORM WASHINGTON OF ANY FURTHER RELEVANT DEVELOPMENTS ON THIS ISSUE. MYERSON

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